

have done this years ago when Ronald Reagan was President.

LINE-ITEM VETO WILL HELP CUT WASTEFUL SPENDING

(Mrs. VUCANOVICH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. VUCANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, today we will note on H.R. 2, the Line-Item Veto Act. Having recently cast a historic vote to pass the balanced budget amendment, we are on our way to sound fiscal management. But if we are genuinely interested in bringing the Federal budget under control, we must look at additional means of restraining spending. H.R. 2 is an important tool in this process.

H.R. 2 gives the President true line-item veto authority, empowering him to disallow specific items in spending bills without having to veto the entire legislation—which may contain worthwhile and necessary programs. Perhaps more importantly, H.R. 2 places the burden on Congress to act initially to reject a President's rescission message.

Too often, spending bills passed by Congress contain items, especially pork-barrel projects, that would not stand up to the test of an individual vote. If used in a conscientious manner, the authority that H.R. 2 confers on the President could indeed help effectively cut wasteful spending out of the Federal budget.

I support H.R. 2 and urge my colleagues to likewise support this important measure.

RESTORE SANITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO FEDERAL SPENDING

(Mr. HUTCHINSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HUTCHINSON. Mr. Speaker, here is a list of good reasons why the line-item veto must be passed:

A \$58 million bailout of George Steinbrenner's shipbuilding company; \$15 million for never-authorized court-houses which were opposed by the Federal judges whom they were built for; \$11.5 million to upgrade a powerplant for the soon-to-be-closed Philadelphia Naval Shipyard; and \$35 million to eradicate screwworms in Mexico.

It is time to end the spending sprees and get off the pork-barrel merry-go-round. The American people are watching and they are demanding greater accountability in the budget process. We should pass the line-item veto with the same bipartisan majorities that the unfunded mandates and the balanced budget amendment had.

Mr. Speaker, the line-item veto is a no-brainer. We need it; the American people want it. And we should act now to restore sanity and accountability to Federal spending.

AND THE BEAT GOES ON

(Mr. HAYWORTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HAYWORTH. Mr. Speaker, that sound you hear from the other side of the aisle is the last drumbeat of the old order. Our liberal friends continue to march to the beat of Government mandates, Government spending, and Government taxing. That is why they are so quick to endorse an increase in the minimum wage, so quick to oppose the balanced budget amendment, so desperate in their opposition to the line-item veto.

But the American people are marching to the beat of a different drummer. They look to the future and to us for new solutions, smaller Government and fewer mandates.

The American people want the private sector to be able to create jobs that pay more than just the minimum wage. They want a future free of non-sensical, repetitive, and unproductive regulations. And that is why the people voted against liberal Democrats in overwhelming numbers last November.

Mr. Speaker, the tired, old drumbeat of bigger Government, bigger taxes, and bigger spending goes on. Thankfully, the American people have stopped listening. They have started reading the "Contract With America," soon to be No. 1 on the best seller list and the No. 1 priority of this New Republican Congress.

□ 1430

RAISING THE MINIMUM WAGE WILL HELP MAKE WORK PAY

(Mr. RICHARDSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I received a letter last week from Harvey Nehring, who lives in Farmington, NM. Harvey cannot understand how anybody could even think of opposing a raise in the minimum wage.

Harvey stated that people who oppose an increase in the minimum wage do not realize that it costs the working poor \$40 an hour to get their car repaired and \$60 an hour to fix their plumbing. The working poor have no health insurance, no retirement benefits. They receive no gifts from lobbyists, and do not receive frequent flyer miles. In Harvey's words, the working poor are simply honest Americans who work hard to keep this country going.

Mr. Speaker, raising the minimum wage is a bipartisan issue. In 1989, the vote on increasing the minimum wage was 382 to 37 in the House. It was proposed by then President Bush. Mr. Speaker, we should all agree that in order to get people off welfare, we need to give them a salary that will help their ends meet.

Mr. Speaker, I agree with Harvey. Let us raise the minimum wage.

THE TAXPAYER WILL BE THE WINNER WITH THE LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. JONES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, last fall, we asked the American people to vote for us, the Republican Party, and in return, we would change the way Congress does business. We promised a three-part attack consisting of change, reform, and fiscal accountability.

We pledged to adopt the Fiscal Responsibility Act, combining the balanced budget amendment and the line-item veto. Two weeks ago, we soundly passed the balanced budget amendment, and now it is our responsibility, to pass the line-item veto.

The bill continues the fight we began for the American people in January. The veto requires Congress to justify or eliminate all spending projects. Ultimately, it changes business as usual, no longer will the President blindly sign a bill with hidden pork projects.

It is the ultimate budget reform initiative. Let us continue the fight and pass this much needed legislation. The taxpayer will be the definite winner.

INCREASING THE BUDGET DOES NOT CUT SPENDING

(Mr. NEUMANN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NEUMANN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the spending increases in the budget recently proposed by President Clinton. Only in Washington, DC, would we look at spending increases from year to year and talk about budget cuts.

Mr. Speaker, look at the numbers. In fiscal year 1995, we will spend \$1,539 billion. In fiscal year 1996, if we do as the President has proposed, that number goes to \$1,612 billion. Mr. Speaker, that is a spending increase of \$73 billion, and all I am hearing discussion about is how we have cut spending. We have not cut spending, we have increased spending by \$73 billion.

Carry this thing out to the year 2000. In the fiscal year 2000, if we do as is proposed today in the President's budget we will spend \$1,905 billion. That is an increase of \$366 billion. We have not cut spending, Mr. Speaker, we are increasing spending. It is about time the American people knew what was going on here, so we can get down to the serious business of balancing this budget.

Mr. Speaker, we can do better. We must do better. Our children deserve it.

A PROMISE TO FORMER PRESIDENT REAGAN: THE HOUSE WILL PASS THE LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. CHRISTENSEN asked and was given permission to address the House

for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, Republicans have promised a lot lately. We promised to make Congress subject to the same laws that the rest of the American people have to live with. We kept that promise. We promised to give the American people a balanced budget amendment. We kept that promise. We promised to put an end to burdensome unfunded mandates, and we kept that promise.

Mr. Speaker, Republicans are keeping every single promise we have made to the American people. Today we will fulfill another promise by voting and passing the line-item veto.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to make one more promise. Seven years ago President Ronald Reagan delivered his final State of the Union Address. He asked Congress to give the future Presidents the line-item veto. He would not have it, but he was asking for the American people and for every President to come after him to have that opportunity.

I promise to him on his 84th birthday today that we will give the President of the United States the line-item veto. I ask my colleagues to vote in favor of that today.

CONGRESS MUST RESTORE THE 25-PERCENT DEDUCTION FOR HEALTH CARE EXPENSES TO FARMERS AND SMALL BUSINESS PEOPLE

(Mr. GANSKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GANSKE. Mr. Speaker, I am going to vote today for the line-item veto. Two summers ago in the State of Iowa when we had floods, we saw the disaster bill pay for courthouses in New York and strips of highway in West Virginia. However, I want to address another issue, also. I rise today to express the frustration of the people of Iowa over the failure of this body to restore the 25-percent deduction for health care expenses for self-employed individuals.

America's farmers, the heart and soul of this Nation, do not qualify for the same tax deduction for health care expenses which are available to employees of large corporations. Instead, they are provided with only a thin 25-percent deduction, and that expired at the end of 1993. Congress has still failed to take the steps necessary to restore this.

Mr. Speaker, farmers and other self-employed individuals across the State of Iowa and the rest of America are waiting for this important tax provision to be extended. At a time when every Member of Congress is working to expand this health care insurance, we must make this available again.

URGING CONGRESS TO DO JUSTICE TO RONALD REAGAN'S BIRTHDAY AND PASS A STRONG LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. ROTH asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROTH. Mr. Speaker, I want to join all of our colleagues this afternoon who have endorsed the line-item veto and are going to be voting for it today. I think it is important to recall the exact words of President Reagan when he was here January 21, 1988, and asked the House to do that. He said:

Let's help ensure our future prosperity by giving the President a tool that, though I will not get to use it, is one I know future Presidents of either party must have.

Give the President the same authority that 43 Governors use in their States: The right to reach into massive appropriation bills, pare away the waste, and enforce budget discipline. Let's approve the line-item veto.

Today we are going to carry that through on the President's wishes. Mr. Speaker, the line-item veto is an invaluable instrument in the arsenal to cut Government spending, and an absolute necessity to give the Congress the discipline we need to change the spending culture in Washington.

I applaud my colleagues for putting forth the hard work and finally bringing us to the line-item veto which we will face today.

KEEP MOVING FORWARD ON THE CONTRACT—SUPPORT THE LINE-ITEM VETO

(Mr. LATHAM asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. LATHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise to encourage my colleagues to take the next step forward on fulfilling the Contract With America and approve the Presidential line-item veto.

During meetings with constituents over the last several weeks, I have been extremely pleased to hear their message. They say "We see you working hard, making real changes and keeping your promises, and we like what we are watching."

The line-item veto is the next step in making it harder for Congress to tax, spend and pile up debt. Asking the President to cut unnecessary spending without line-item veto is like asking a surgeon to do this work with a meat ax. His prospects for success are so slim, the most likely result is that he will not take the chance. That is why we need to provide him with a precision instrument, the line-item veto.

Members of Congress should not be afraid of the line-item veto or any other tool that increases accountability. By making ourselves more accountable, we are winning back the people's trust. And that is the most important tool in any democracy.

RAISING SPENDING IS NOT A SPENDING CUT

(Mr. STEARNS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, in President Clinton's State of the Union that he gave just about 2 weeks ago in this Chamber, this is what he said: "Should we cut the deficit more? Well, of course we should." As many of the Members will remember, that was a great line, and many a lot of us applauded. However, his 1996 fiscal year budget came in, and the question is, why did he not?

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, does the Clinton administration still have as its highest priority reduced spending? Not only does his budget ring up almost \$200 billion in deficit for fiscal year 1996, but it projects deficits of almost \$200 billion every year to the year 2005. It uses the same old accounting gimmicks that we have seen before, and it claims \$144 billion in cuts in Federal spending over 5 years. The reality is that in fiscal year 1996 alone, the administration proposed increasing spending by \$50 billion.

Mr. Speaker, do we have to say it again? Raising spending by less than we plan is not a spending cut.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S BUDGET INCREASES THE DEFICIT

(Mr. SMITH of Michigan asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, Members of Congress were given the President's budget today, and once we look at that budget, I hope every Member, Republican and Democrat, as well as the American people, will be as upset as I am as I have gone through this budget.

Here is what I see: Spending every year goes up faster than inflation. Even the so-called reductions are gimmick accounting. They are not truly reductions.

Let me tell the Members what happens to the national debt.

□ 1440

At the end of 1994, the national public debt of this country was \$4.6 trillion. This budget, by the year 2000, increases the debt to \$6.67 trillion, from \$4.6 to \$6.67 trillion in this 5-year period. Ladies and gentlemen, the interest on the public debt this year is going to be \$339 billion. That is 25 percent of all revenues coming into the Federal Government.

We have to do it better. Let us do it.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives: